

2HB

2HB *vol.13*

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Lola

To be performed by three individuals. For each act they will adopt a position and hold it until the end of the act.

A1

Position 1

Plant

This city, raging through levels, tilted balconies. Sporadic activity, gestures in freeze-frame. Pushing against walls, limbs extended to full stretch. The awakening presence at regular slots, side stepping gradually from one corner to the other. Cold liquid refreshing the tired head.

Milk

Pourable expanse. Thick then thin surface. Slipping, salivating moisture. Body separates and cocoons the shiny form. Solid structure measured out to purify. Calcium rich rejuvenation, gloss for skin. Cows, goats, mothers. Nutrients for the skeleton. Decanted from a moulded plastic enclosure. Vibrant flow curving into another dimension. Fresh, lapping legs their dappled imperfections. Rising to the lip, sweeping and approaching again. Spilt stain, an unstable blot. Splashes mark out a methodical kata.



A2

Position 2

Body

Traversing. Indecision over a starting point. Leaning into position. Hand over palm, a slow steady greeting. Tan; movement of hairs, whirlpools of wrinkles. Weight balanced to counter actions. Strain of the lower back is countered by knees and calves. Aiding, reinvigorating, cleansing its own dirt. Enclosed vitrine that holds off unpredictability.

Plant

Tumbling urgency, unfulfilled desire to be set free. Wisdom reflected in perception of time, without panic. Frustrating stillness its growth is only visible over an elongated period. Lack of communication, one is unaware of its mood except through body language.

Milk

Soak in this health. Bright white, uncompromising purity. Take this in your veins, enough of it will do good but not an excess. Sucked or squeezed from teats it strengthens, preventing brittle areas. Bottled for mass distribution, vital inclusion to a balanced diet.



A3

Position 3

Body

Present is a semi conscious action, present but drifting through thoughts and remembered locations. Time dedicated to another, caring for, cleansing touch. Caught in a meditative series of movements. Transfixed by the willing subject, the chilled medium and familiar presence on back and neck. Steady circulation of fluid. Pumping unseen organs, propelling activity around and through too fast to conceive. Outer shell is tame, smooth flow from point to point; angle, stem, joint, pivot. A multitude of circuits opening and closing at different times.

This complex tapestry of information is executed with ease and lack of consciousness.

Plant

Organic organism. Slowly dancing, shooting in counter intuitive directions. Arching over, sprouting out. Roots and green, veins separating from a central spine. Captured but always in motion. Satellites palming towards the sun. Its caresses like a deep breath that is held in. Snake wrapped limbs, double jointed vision. The outside in looking out.



A4

Position 4

Plant

Processing gases into breathable air. A fundamental resource that is felled for energy or currency. Intuitive sporadic nature, full conviction without doubt or regret. Resilient nature, working with potential problems so as not to be permanently disrupted by them. Malleable construction weaving through oncoming anger.

Milk

Impenetrable. A contortionist that wraps itself around predatory obstacles.

Becoming more ephemeral with enhanced physicality. Slow expelled perversion released on to taut skin, dispersing in opposing directions to then re-group at the point. Grime exchanged back into the concoction curdling on top.

Plant

Fresh cool awakening. Planes rising diagonally up, forwards towards the transparent opening. Some forgotten and lagging behind, lost to another purpose. Withered, encrusted, gnarled atrocities. Languid attempts to give up gracefully. Lost to an out dated way of thinking, unable to adapt to new demands.



A5

Position 5

Body

Prop, restructuring failing arteries, strapping up out of kilter spinal column. Lenses monitoring intricate and delicate strokes. Gracefully sweeping in then out again, down curve then up, back to front. Working from one to the next clockwise cycle. Movements acting in unison, a well orchestrated composition.

Milk

Purity sterilised with man's science, thinned out and turned in on itself. Absorbed in glugs then expelled through growth. Descending thin lengths, knobbly veins to the nervous system. A journey into depths of a subculture.

Body

The space between actions and thoughts, the two collide and matter outside is sensitive to the paradox. A centralisation that bombards the senses like a bassy drone. Drilling olfactory pungency, a disruption that inverts the comfort of the domestic space.



A6

Position 6

Plant

Glowing faces, reflecting the afternoon sun, dark green turning white. Narrowing as the ellipse moves away into a long tip that falls at the end. A streamline entity discarding excess liquid as not to collapse under its weight.

Shoots that rise out of tangled lengths, optimistic, rigidly erect. Life taking advantage of its source of energy. Burrowing in and out of dark brown earth, tracing marks left by foundations. Feeding off waste, pests ensuring nothing goes without use. A minute biosphere which perpetuates whilst being a threat and associate. Basking in the peace and devoted attention that is being given.

Subtle handling of bodily parts. The moment seems clear of distractions, a near silence, reciprocated affection. Flamboyant personality that unashamedly dominates the room, brightness splashing in inconvenient streaks, mapping out forgotten crannies.



Body

Ignorant to the complex universe that surrounds its shell. Naïve of what it is and how it functions. Distilled with the knowledge that the sublime is ever present and its person is but a grain of sand. The false notion of its own superiority and civilized pursuits. Calloused and gnarled. Clenching then extracting pure debauchery. The excited sweat of a nubile innocent, drenched into nature's welcoming fissures. An oppressive shadow that imposes its tone on to a commodified utopian signifier. Manipulating the weather conditions and scope for development. A megalomaniac who is powerless outside their palace.

Milk

Soaked into blue cloth, mass transferred into another body. Lifted from a lipped chrome bowl. Transported horizontally along an empty plain. Moisture that is normally provided by the natural habitat to be given intravenously. Squeezed out and spread evenly on to the soft skin.

Stalagmite

EMILY ILETT

He was young at the beginning, and small. No one thought he should do it, they said it was dangerous. Others said it was lazy and crazy and some worried. The ones that worried brought him food and drink. When he was older they brought him spirits to keep him warm, others brought him spirits to test him. He was six the first time he stepped beneath it, and he stood there for eleven years. By the end he had the beginnings of a beard. He learned to sleep standing up and to move his feet and hands and back and neck subtly so as to avoid cramp. Sometimes it looked as if he was dancing. He felt himself grow, and he felt the stalactite grow. Silently, he watched the distance lessen. Years passed. The boy spoke a little to the stalactite, or else to the empty air. He talked about the shapes he saw amongst its curving bumps and the sound the dripping made on the ground. The drips fell between his feet. Years passed.

When they touched, at first he didn't realise. He had thought it would be sudden, like a bump. But it happened slowly, the cold reaching slowly through his head, slowly to the bone.

Rannoch Street

Spring Equinox

It is the last flat of the day. Number seven on the list.

A quiet tree lined street in the city of G. A small, spare street perpendicular to the river. The cherry trees, which blossomed last week full of pregnant spring promise, have already been blown bare by the harsh equinoctial winds.

The building is late Victorian, maybe early Edwardian. A red sandstone tenement whose sharp outlines are only now beginning to dissolve after more than a century's wind and rain.

M wonders if this might be it: the new start.

The street is named after one of the wildest and most remote of Scottish moors. Few of the original residents here - two rooms, strictly artisan dwellings for the nearby foundry - would ever have seen it. Unless, of course, they had fled its margins, come here to the steam and the smoke looking for work.

But the speculator who built these flats might have shot deer there with other Edwardian gentleman. Or Victorian gentlemen, if that's what they were (picturing them M thinks about whether that might make a difference to the shape of their moustaches, the sizes of their cuffs and collars, the smell of their wives). Or maybe he named this city street in the hope that one day he might make enough money to shoot there.

M knows the moor. She knows it is a beautiful but devastated place. A real wilderness: not pristine, but blasted. The graveyard of a thousand year-old forest cut down for war and fuel. Even a century ago it was long dead. There is more hope here amongst the blighted cherry blossom, a thousand times more new life, than amongst the bleached skeletons of the moor.

The flat is small, bright, high: an eyrie. The bathroom so narrow you would catch your shins each time you opened the door. But bruised shins are nothing to be afraid of, or at least nothing new. In the back room is a sofa bed. In the recess: a cot, a sleeping bundle.

The couple that own the flat hover anxiously when she talks to them in the hall; they are keen to sell quickly. "I can understand that," M smiles. "With the baby, it must be a nightmare on these stairs."

There is an embarrassed silence. They look at each other. They look at M. He speaks first, while she averts her eyes. There is no baby. M laughs, mutters, oh I must be going mad I've looked at so many flats today. Later, on the pretence of checking the double glazing she goes back into the room. There is no baby. Just a sofa bed, a print of a highland scene in ridiculous colours of Provencal blue and yellow. The recess is empty.

BANE

A collaborative project
by Janice McNab and Moira Jeffrey

Summer Solstice

Three months have gone by. She has never seen the baby again. One morning she finds a pebble on the kitchen windowsill that she can't quite remember putting there. It is cool to the touch, but if she holds it long enough in her palm it warms.

Her grandmother had taught her to do that, it's how you tell the difference between true jet and French jet: one is dull yet warm, it looks inconsequential. The other is far more beautiful, but is merely black glass. When you hold the warming jet in your hands it is a direct link to the once living carbon. A step back amongst your ancestors: black jet, black coal, a green tree.

A few days later she dreams that there is a man in the house. He wears a red shirt. It is a dream isn't it? But one night, a week later, when she can't see anything in the brief, brief darkness of high summer, he sits down at the end of her bed and the whole structure dips.

So this is it then. The newness is never new enough. What she has now: a view from high up, a stone she can warm in her hand. But she is to be haunted by the things she doesn't have. A man in her bed; a baby in the recess.

She had told herself there was comfort in the river nearby and the rope factory, an extraordinary leftover from the age of steam and steel. She tells herself it is the reassurance of routine. The factory horns, the rhythm of the shifts, the never-ending flow of the river wearing a deepening seam in the stone fabric of the city.

But sometimes the house seems to tell her otherwise: here is a rope you can hang yourself with; there is a river to drown in.

Autumn Equinox

She dreams a horrible dream. She is washing her hair and when she looks down the shampoo is red in her hands. There is red everywhere. She must be bleeding.

The next day her mother phones: I've done something you will never believe, she laughs, something really silly for a sixty year-old.

It all falls into place. Oh, she laughs, you've dyed your hair red. It wasn't blood after all. Or it was blood, but the kind that flows unbidden and invisible through the umbilical cord however long-severed.

Her mother doesn't ask how she guessed. They have spent a lifetime tiptoeing around the knowledge they both share. The ghost on the stairs, the foretastes, the knowing things.

The inkling that is there and not there. Like the light rain that doesn't so much fall as lurk in Rannoch Street. A smirr her mother would call it: a smirr of rain.

The kind of moisture you might barely see but that cloaks you gently, stealthily until you are soaked.

She has developed a weird taste for whisky, although she never liked the stuff before. One night her mother stays over. And claims she is woken by the smell of it.

Winter Solstice

In December she is wrapped in a blanket, asleep. Her dram untested on the table, when she is woken by muffled voices. The river has burst its banks. There is a police car with a loud hailer (do they even call them that these days?) If you are in a lower flat you must get sandbags and go. But she is high up. Oh she is high, high up.

She turns over and goes back to sleep on the sofa. She does not leave the house and is marooned for three days. She is primeval, living above a swamp. When the floodwater goes down it takes the soil with it: the roots of the cherry trees are exposed like old hands stripped of excess flesh.

Spring Equinox.

In March the cherry trees flower again. The factory announces it will close; nobody wants rope any more. The developers are circling. The estate agent says the market is buoyant again. She smells change.

In April she remembers a story her friend told her about when she worked in a city bed and breakfast twenty years ago: the morning she pulled back the sheets and the blood ran out. Back then, kind of giggling and kind of scared, they thought of murder, of organ trafficking, of orgiastic rites.

But now M knows that it was a kind of haunting.

When she was born, her own mother suffered a massive haemorrhage. Dying she said, felt a pleasant relief, a gentle fading away. In the visible world everything was pristine: her mother was pale, exhausted yet vaguely triumphant amongst the starched sheets. They didn't notice she was dying until it was very, very late and when they pulled back the top sheet, a river of blood, a fountain of blood, a waterfall.

M sells the flat. She leaves the city of G. Months later she realises she has lost the pebble, but when she puts her hands in her jeans pocket she finds it has worn a hole in the lining.



A heap

There is a heap in the centre of the image. It is composed of a minor abundance of leaves and grass. It is assembled; gathered. There is a hole in the middle, a dark point around which the strands of grass and other matter arrange themselves. It could be called heap, or a small pile, or an entanglement. From a central point emerge a strata of mid grey thistles, partially hidden, woven with the grass, binding the pile together. Over and above this complex and striated form the grass intersects itself turning angles, bending, crossing and connecting with other pieces. These crossings form triangular shapes and long directional sweeps leading out from the dark centre to other areas of darkness at the edges. These seeming voids build the heap around them. Looking into them other shapes can be discerned, the texture of a crumpled fern and the mud of the ground, beyond which no more is revealed. In the lower part of the image, centrally placed but slightly to the right, a body of dried leaves branch out from the stem of a withered plant. It seems to function as a kind of prop, supporting grasses, leaves and thistles, enabling them to come together and take shape. The leaves curve around and backwards to give a dry, crisp complexity. The veins on the leaves are prominent tracing their surface towards the darkness of their underside beneath which the intersections of grasses and ground begin again. There is a sense of direction; the heap has been drawn together, some intervention has occurred. It is difficult to define where it begins, as elements that form it lead off into other areas. In contrast, beyond its dimensions, earth, grass and stones occupy their own position.



A Pile

There is a pile in the centre of the image. It forms a simultaneously circular and triangular structure emerging from the ground and rising to a peak. The middle of the pile has a concave shape with elements intersecting and weaving around one another. Within this space there is an entangled knot of leaves and grasses that form together obscuring their singularity. A slender strand of grass crosses through and out to the left side passing behind a long grey branch and away from the body of the pile. It tapers into a fine collection of seeds that set off from the stem in varied directions tilting one way and another, dissecting occasionally. Counterbalancing the grey branch another grey stick interjects on the right side projecting forwards from back to front and curving inwards. It gives depth and scale to the pile whilst also demarcating its limits. From the centre various kinds of sticks and grasses entwine around each other, some brittle and broken, others supple and curving. In the foreground and slightly to the left a leaf sits proud, it is alive and fresh with markings. It forms into three parts each perpendicular to the next and the soft mid grey tone of its surface sets it apart from the contrasts of dried grass, leaves beneath it. The edges are formed by a body of grasses combining together to encase the other matter in a skein like surface. They twist around and then fall downwards towards the foreground. Around the edges living leaves and brambles grow.



Un Échec / Hard Nut to crack

JUDITH BROWNING

What's the craic?

I am going to read this if there is nothing else to do.
When I have done this, I am going to the pub.

O.W will help me re-write it when he has time.

What are you going to do if he can't help you re-write it?
I am going to stay in the pub.

The stylised silhouette will stretch up the walls, when engulfing symptoms of hypochondria rain down. If his pantomime shadow was wandering toward us, the damp would catch the cold air and bind it to the pavement.

An atmosphere of expectation is withdrawn until next Tuesday. One-legged birds will fall from heaven and persuade us to pose for portraits with Charlie. I will bring the window and the projector; they travel well and fit in the suitcase. When in transit O.W's fur coat will become frayed, its blue lining made visible. The saddlebagged director; setting up patchwork scenes and backdrops that lack any chronological order. Tickle your iguana under the chin, our two owls won't give a hoot.

Don't worry – canonical signs of pure image will stuff your face and ease the indigestion. Wash it down with soothing euphoric values, chalky and pink. If it were going to possess the senses you would feel it tingle first. One kiss for the road.

I should warn you, this area will soon be uninhabited due to the complete lack of senseless wanderings. Wondering aimlessly, to escape from form and presupposed ideological basis. Will this logic permeate despite the absence of transcendental or religious rationale?

The comfort of common domestic problems provide a cosy setting; we can observe and meekly question the melodrama that probes the condition of modern sensibilities; spinning moral life into a tale of fiction. If we are all stars, then all that heaven allows will nurse blinding fantasies that have no future. Forming a mutual cause and a complete lack of imagination.

Will we assume the melancholy of a Douglas Sirk picture? Reflexive systems of communication create a moral necromancy in order to define thoughts and actions ethically.

But why bother with these senseless wanderings? Merely to waste time, in search of something unknown, overwhelmed by yearnings that have no future. Thoughts that disrupt the current pattern of life need melodrama to make the mortal soul a tale of fiction. Adopting affected conventions, allegory and ontology as a metalanguage of distance.

It's the end and the beginning of haecceity; or the means to an end. Only if you let the mind impute logic not given by the words themselves. Cheap images, common language – blur the form and content. But the effect must always take greater precedence.

Belt
Kiss
Suck

Often the end comes with a bathetic eruption, then stagnation. Venturing out, food is scarce perhaps the risk has to be run. I am sure it will be easy to swallow. It lacks offensive weapons, nevertheless can cause damage. Does each drop of water sound the same as it drips into the bowl. I'd like to be thought of as an unoriginal genius. What will it be today? The fur scuffed, the blue mesh revealed.

O. W calls it the production of modern life contexts. Or a symptom of pervasive neurosis?
Sweet things to eat in Switzerland.

Stop mediating the one handed clap with language and discourse.
I'd like a small yellow friend to come and sit on my belly while I slept on top of the dog house.

Rolling, red and ripe, it will be signified and signifier; what still life will O.W's and I assemble? The problems always arise when choice becomes an option, things must be compared and a favourite selected.

Outside, Looking

SCOTT ROGERS

Paraphrased from memory from a story recounted by Viorel (I forget his last name):

My sister's friend, with whom she worked, wanted to have a baby very much. This woman prayed continuously asking for a son or a daughter. When eventually she had a child, the boy showed remarkable intelligence and began speaking quite early in his life. Almost as soon as he could enunciate the boy would say strange things. His most peculiar disclosure was that he was an alien. He claimed that he had heard his mother's prayers and had decided to come to Earth to make her happy and fulfill her maternal desires. The boy grew up entirely anti-social. He preferred to read continuously from dense philosophical books rather than participating in day-to-day relationships.

Now he is in his 20's and lives hermit-like in his mother's apartment. Aside from his mother, he only communicates with a few individuals on the internet who are like him. Left on his own he will not eat and neglects himself. His mother must set highly specific feeding times. He continues to read all sorts of books constantly. His mother has a friend who works at a library. Because of this she can get him as many books as he requires. His preferred area of study is psychology.

This boy's mother works for the government and is a fairly successful woman, so she can afford to look after him. He has tried to commit suicide twice, both times for the same reason: because he feels his mother is not giving him enough attention. He says that the only reason he came to his mother was to make her happy and give her what she wanted. If she is not putting enough into their relationship then he will just leave. He says that when she dies he will kill himself and go back to where he came from.

At the time this story was told Viorel did not know the young man's name and had never spoken with him or seen him.



Stand!

Go keep going that's great!

Very good - Excellent

OK

keep going

you're so close

keep going

very good

very good

Keep one of your hands on it

yeah you are

you're almost there

keep going

you can do it

go on you can do it

hands up

hands up

go on keep that hand up

get your hand up

and stand on the edge

stand up

stand up

You're almost there

Writers' biographies

JUDITH BROWNING

Judith Browning is an artist and writer living and working in Glasgow and is also a committee member of Market Gallery. She will be starting an MFA in Art Writing at Goldsmiths University, London this year. Her writing investigates a temporal and speculative dialogue created between the participant, a narrative voice (or voices) and visual art.

EMILY ILETT

Emily Ilett graduated from Glasgow School of Art in 2011, she is a studio resident at The Pipe Factory, an artist-led studio and exhibition space in the eastend of Glasgow. Emily will co-curate *ok-yuh-pahy*, a performance event with artist Ashanti Harris as part of Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art, 2012

JANICE McNAB & MOIRA JEFFREY

Janice McNab is an artist based in Amsterdam. She is represented by Ersatz, London and teaches at The Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam. Moira Jeffrey is a writer based in Glasgow. She recently undertook a Fairbairn Critical Writing Residency at Cove Park.

GIUSEPPE MISTRETTA

Giuseppe Mistretta is unsure of where he's heading but is enjoying the journey. Recent projects include: *Goldenrod Adorned Log*, g39, *Cardiff* with Victor & Hester; *The Event*, *The Lombard Method*, *Birmingham* with David Dale Gallery; gnommero - exactitude, 2011. Giuseppe would like to thank Charlotte Barker, Fiona Short and Scott Rogers.

SCOTT ROGERS

Scott Rogers is a Canadian artist based in Glasgow. His work has been shown extensively in Canada and internationally including exhibitions at the Southern Alberta Art Gallery, the Art Gallery of Alberta, PM Galerie (Berlin), The American University Beirut (Lebanon). Currently, Scott is currently studying with Simon Starling at the Staedelschule in Frankfurt and will complete his MFA at the Glasgow School of Art in spring 2012.

JESSICA POTTER

Jessica Potter is an artist who lives and works in London. She is currently in the process of completing a PhD by practice at the Royal College of Art. Her research focuses on the relationship between word and image in constructing the visual, with a particular interest in the work of Walker Evans and Gustave Flaubert. She has exhibited widely and recently published writing in *Transmission: Hospitality*, Sheffield Hallam University and *Gnommero*, edited by Sarah Tripp.

JOBY WALDMAN

Joby Waldman has no formal art training but comes to art practice driven largely by a fascination in public intervention and soundscape. He has produced a number of radio documentaries for BBC Radio on subjects ranging from; futurism, slang & graffiti, to the post office. Joby's contribution to 2HB *Volume 13* is part of a series he calls 'Foundbites'. Recorded on location, then transcribed on to the page; each piece captures a particular place at a unique moment in time. *Almost There* was recorded at The Castle Climbing Centre in Hackney.

2HB is a journal published four times a year by the Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow. Experimental and creative writing in contemporary art practice are central to the concerns of *2HB*. Edited by Jamie Kenyon, Francis McKee and Louise Shelley

ISBN 978-0-9566286-3-3

© 2011, Centre for Contemporary Arts, the artists, the writers
Published March 2012 in an edition of 300 by Centre for Contemporary Arts
Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow www.cca-glasgow.com
The CCA is supported by Creative Scotland and Glasgow City Council.
CCA is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. Registered
Company No: SC140944

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